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From: CN=Bonnie Bellow/OU=R2/O=USEPA/C=US
Sent: Fri 10/28/2011 11:01:14 PM
Subject: Passaic Event Press Release
<http://passaicremovalaction.com/home.htm>
<http://www.ourpassaic.org>
<http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/npl/diamondalkali/>
<http://twitter.com/eparegion2>
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Here is the release in almost final form. It still needs one address and a quote from the Corps. See you Monday.

EPA Begins Work to Remove Dioxin-laden Sediment from the Lower Passaic River

(New York, N.Y. – October 31, 2011) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today announced the start of construction needed to remove contaminated sediment from the lower Passaic River. This is an important milestone in the cleanup of this heavily contaminated stretch of the Passaic adjacent to the Diamond Alkali Superfund site in Newark, New Jersey. The sediment in this area of the river is highly contaminated with dioxin, which can cause serious health effects, including cancer. Vertical steel walls will be installed in the river to enclose the area, making it possible for EPA to remove the sediment without spreading contamination during dredging. EPA Regional Administrator Judith A. Enck was joined by Senator Robert Menendez, Congressman Bill Pascrell, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Colonel John Boule and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin to mark the start of the cleanup.

"The cleanup of this section of the Passaic River will remove the most highly contaminated sediment, which is a continuing source of contamination flowing downstream," said Judith A. Enck, EPA Regional Administrator. "This is a critical step toward the ultimate goal of cleaning up this river and making it an asset to the communities along its banks."

"The cleanup of the lower Passaic River, one of the most severely contaminated waterways in the world, is a top environmental priority of the Christie Administration," said New Jersey DEP Commissioner Bob Martin. "New Jersey has been steadfast in its position that those companies responsible for this egregious, intentional pollution be held accountable for the cost of cleaning it up. Today marks an important step toward our ultimate goal -- a fully restored and healthy Passaic River that can once again be a swimmable and fishable natural resource to benefit Newark and New Jersey's other overburdened urban communities."

Colonel Boule quote

Under a June 2008 agreement between EPA and Occidental Chemical Corporation and Tierra Solutions, Inc., the companies will remove 200,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from the badly contaminated area directly in front of the Diamond Alkali site. The EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will oversee the work.

The cleanup of the lower Passaic River has been divided into two phases. The first phase of cleanup announced today is designed to protect the river, workers conducting the cleanup and the communities along the river. In this first phase, about 40,000 cubic yards of the most highly contaminated sediment will be removed and then piped to a processing facility beginning in the spring of 2012. That facility is currently under construction a quarter mile downstream from the Diamond Alkali site at (insert location). There, the water will be squeezed from the contaminated sediment, treated and then transported by rail to a licensed disposal facility. Air and water monitoring at the work locations will ensure safe operations.

In the planned second phase of the project, 160,000 cubic yards of sediment, much of it with lower levels of contamination than the first 40,000 cubic yards, will be removed from the same area of the Passaic River. The two-phase removal project is just one installment in a more comprehensive investigation of the contamination and evaluation of cleanup options for the lower eight miles of the Passaic River and possibly other stretches of the river and Newark Bay.

A community health and safety plan was developed with input from the Passaic River Community Advisory Group. The plan includes toll-free hotlines in English, Spanish and Portuguese that the public can call during the cleanup. The hotlines numbers are 888-283-7626 for English speakers and 877-777-5853 for Spanish and Portuguese speakers. The public can also visit the website at <http://passaicremovalaction.com/home.htm>.

Information on the removal project and other Superfund site cleanup activities is also available on the project Web sites at <http://www.ourpassaic.org> or <http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/npl/diamondalkali/>

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